

A BRIEFE DIALOGVE,

Concerning preparation for
the worthy receiving of the Lords
S V P P E R.

Taken, for the most part, out of
the ten Sermons of Mr. I. D O D,
and Mr. R. C L E A V E R, touch-
ing that Subiect.



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A DIALOGUE of Preparation to the Lords SUPPER.

Question.

WHAT is the Lords Supper?

Answer.

It is a Sacrament of the Mat. 26.28
eternal Covenant, where-
by through the bis of bread
and wine rightly ministered, and faith-
fully received, the souls of them that are
ingrafted into Christ are spiritually now-
risled unto eternall life.

Ioh. 6.37.
54. &c.

Q. What then is required of those that
will bee partakers of this heauenly food
at the Lords Table?

A. They must be prepared as ~~mele~~
guests for such a banquet.

Mat. 22.12
1. Cor. 11.
28.

Q. For the better attaining to this pre-
paration, how many things are there to
be considered?

A 3

A. Three

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A. There: first, what is to be done before the parting of it; secondly, what at it; thirdly, what after it.

I Examina-
tion.

Q. What is it that must be done before?

A. There must be, first, an examination how fit we are to receive: secondly, a premeditation of the benefits that we are to receive: thirdly, a faithfull and fervent prayer for Gods blessing vpon our examination, premeditation, and receiving.

Q. Of what points are we to examine our selues?

A. First, in generall, whether we be of the number of the fafholl, and haue in vs the life of grace: for otherwise we are utterly vnfitt to be partakers of the Lords Supper, which is appointed for food to continue spirituall life where it is, and not to worke it where it is not: to be for nourishment vnto Gods childdren, but for the bane & destruction of dogs and devine, that dare presume to meddle with the same. Secondly, we must examine our selues more particularly.

Q. Concerning what matters?

A. Whether wes haue attained vnto a competent measure of Repentance, knowledge, faith, and loue: whitch if we can

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can finde in our selues, we may resolute our hearts in that point of generall examination, & conclude that we are within the covenant of grace, and haue communion with Christ Jesus, & therfore are in state to be communicants at his Table.

Q. How should we try our selues in the matter of repentance?

A. We must examine, first, whether we haue at any time carefully listed our hearts and behauor, to find out as many of our corruptions as possibly we could. Secondly, whether we haue been, and are heartily sorry for the same. Thirdly, whether we haue rightly confessed them before the Lord, with an earnest desire of the pardon thereof. Fourthly, whether we purpose and resolve so ever hereafter (through Gods gracious assistance) to reformat both our hearts and wayes.

Q. Is there any necessity of that searching of our selues?

A. Yes verily: for otherwise we shall be found hidors of sins, which hindreth all true prosperity, and argueth plainly that there is in vs a loue of iniquity, and abundance of hypocritis, w will keape vs from reaping benefit by the word or sacrament

Searching.
See the
Sermon
Pro. 28. 13.
Doct. I.
Job. 20. 12.

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Q. Whereby should we try our selues to the intent that we may come to a more full and particular light of our corruptiōns?

A. By the Law of God, which is the true touchstone; examining our selues by every Commandement; that so we may discerne, if not all, yet the most part of the corruption of our sinnes, and evillnes of our lives: and for our more orderly proceeding herein, we may use this direction following: wherein are set downe the chiefe heads of most of the sinnes against every Commandement.

Sinnes against the first Commandement.

If any do desire proofes of Scripture for these particular sinnes mentioned, he may vise the helpe of Mr Dodds Booke on the command-

A Theisme, which is when men either thinke there is no God, or live as if there were no God.

2 Idolatry: which is, the basing of a false god.

3 Ignorance, uncapablenes of knowledge, errors, and heresies.

4 Forgetfullnesse of good things, especially of those that most concerne us, and chiefly at that instant when we should make use of them. So hardly remebering of euill things; especially of those that most

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most corrupt vs : and chiefly then, when we should be most free from the thoughts of them.

5 Unimpenitentnesse unto good things, principally to the best: readiness unto and wilfullnesse in evill, especially the worst. cd.
Secondly, impatience under crosses.

6 Distrust of Gods power, mercy, promises, and providence: whence carnall feares are brought and cherished, & the true feare of God is expelled & banished.

7 Presumption upon Gods mercy.

8 Carnall confidence in wit, learning, wealth, strength, friends, &c. thinking our selves the better, or more safe simply for them: whence ariseth pride and security.

9 Too much loue of evill: as also of our selves, our friends, our pleasures, profit, credit, &c. Secondly, too little loue of God, and of godnesse, of Gods servants, and services.

10 Hatred of God and godnesse. Secondly, want of hatred against our owne, and others sinnes.

11 Abundance of worldly sorrow, shame, and discontentment. Secondly, want of spirituall griefe, and indignation against our owne and others transgressi.

ments or
of the
True watch
where many of these
are touch-

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greetings. Thirdly, not lamenting in of g
the calamities of Gods people, private, ypa
publicke.

12 Immoderate carnall mirth; too ypa
little spirituall joy.

13 Hardnes of heart, benummednes
of conscience; or hellish terrors and ac-
sations, proceeding from doing things i-
ther without, or against the rules of the
world.

Sinnes against the second Commandement.

1 **B**use and unwarranted concells
God, as when we frame any image
of him in our minds.

2 Worshippng of images.

3 Adoration of Angels or Saints, ob-
serving holy dayes in devotion to them,
swearing by them, &c.

4 Approbation of Idolatry by pu-
lence, speech, gesture, silence, keeping of si-
persitious reliques or monuments, keep-
ing company with Idolaters, &c.

5 Neglect of any of Gods ordinances
as of psaching, hearing, reading, medita-
tion, conference, the use of god books, an-

to the Lords Supper:

ing in of good company, of private and publicke
natiue prayer, fasting, making of vews, &c.

6 Superstitions fasting, rash bows,
b: the breach of lawfull bows, abuse of lots, &c.

7 Want of sorrow for being borne of
deceitful doleful fathers.

Sinnes against the third Commandement.

Profession toynd with profane-
ness, whereby Gods name is dis-
honoured.

2 Abusing of Gods word: first, by fruit-
less speaking of it; secondly, framing tests
out of it, or against it; thirdly, main-
taining of same by it; fourthly, applying it to
charming, &c.

3 Abusing the names or titles of God:
first, by admiration, as by saying in our
common talke, Oh Lord, Oh Jesus, &c.
Secondly by cursing, &c.

4 Swearing vainly, outrageously, and
falsely, &c.

5 Blaspheming.

6 Taking a lawfull oath without due
reverence and consideration.

7 Praying without faith, feeling, re-
verence, seruency, not waiting for an-
swer,

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answer, &c. Asking evil things: aiming
more in our requests at the softening of
our necessity, than at the advancement of
Gods glory.

8. Hearing, reading, meditating, con-
ferring, singing of psalms, and receiving
the Sacrament without preparation, at-
tentio[n], reverence, delight, and profit.

9. Light passing over of Gods great
works, of creation, preservation, redemp-
tion, as also of other his mercies & judg-
ments.

10. Abuse of our Christian liberty, &
the hardening, infatrating, perverting, &
instigating of any.

Sinnes against the fourth Commandement.

N Eglect of preparation for the Sa-
bath before it come, and of fitting
our hearts for holy services when it is
come.

2 Profane absence from, or unstruc-
tfull presence at Gods ordinances.

3 Excessive eating and drinking, which
causeth drowsiness, & unfitness for God
worship.

4 Doing

to the Lords Supper.

4 Doing any ordinary works of our calling.

5 All recreations which distract.

6 Waine and worldly speeches, and thoughts.

7 A secret desire that the Sabbath were over.

8 Neglect of calling our selves, or others to a reckoning after holy exercises.

9 Giving liberty to our sinnes in the night before the whole Sabbath be ended.

Sinnes against the first Commandement.

Sinnes of all inferiors in respect of their superiors.

1 **V**ant of reverence inward, outward: Secondly, neglect of prayer: thirdly, of humble submittion:

Sinnes of all Superiors.

First, want of love: secondly, failing in prayer: thirdly, in giving god example.

Sinnes of children in respect of their Parents.

1 Disobedience.

2 Onerousing of their Parents corrections, though willing.

3 Com-

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3 Contemning them for any defect of body or minde.

4 Unthankfulnesse in not relieving them, not standing for their deserved cre dit, &c.

Sinnes of parents.

1 Negligence in not instructing their children betime.

2 Not correcting them till it be too late, or doing it with bitternesse without compassion, instruction, and prayer.

3 Giving them ill example.

4 Neglect of bringing them up in some lawfull calling.

5 Not bestowing them timely, and religiously in marriage.

6 Light behaviour before them, and too much familiarity with them, whereby they become vile in their eyes.

7 Louing beauty, or any outward parts more then Gods Image in them.

8 A sinne peculiar to the mother is refusing to nurse them.

Servants sinnes in respect of their Gouernours.

The three first sins of children may be in servants, as also these that follow.

1 Idlenesse in their calling.

2 W

to the Lords Supper.

- 2 Unthankfulness & unfaithfulness in dealing with their masters gods & affaires.
- 3 Stealing, purvey, defrauding of them.
- 4 Eye service.

Diuers sins of Parents are found in Masters, as these that follow.

1 Unadvised entertainment of unsewell servants.

2 Not using religious exercises with them; not admonishing nor correcting them, or doing it in an ill manner: grieving more when they fail in their busynesse, then when they are slacke in Gods service.

3 Not recompencing their labours by giving them a due reward when they are with them, & when they part from them.

4 Neglect of them in sicknesse: without stopping of their wages for that time.

5 Not relenting them (if they be able) in their age, who haue spent their youth in their service.

Sinnes of the wife in respect of her Husband.

1 Failing in reverence, which appeareth in forward looks, speeches, or behauour.

2 Disobe-

A Dialogue of preparation 2 Differences in the married matters.

Sinnes of the Husband.

- 1 ~~Not~~ of dwelling with his wife.
- 2 Neglect of edifying her by instructions example.

3 Denying her comfortable maintenance, and employment.

Sinnes common to them both.

- 1 Want of love.
- 2 Destroying one another's friendships; discovering each others secrets.
- 3 Jealousie. 4 Contention.

Sinnes of the people in regard of their Ministers.

- 1 Disobeying and opposing against their doctrine.
- 2 Denying them competent maintenance.

3 Not rendering to them when they are sojourners.

Sinnes of Ministers.

- 1 Slacknesse in preaching.
- 2 Unprofitable or hurtfull teaching.
- 3 Giving ill example.

Sinnes of Subjects.

- 1 Rebellion. 2 Refusing to pay their Sines

to the Lords Supper.

Sinnes of Magistrates.

1 Carelessness in establishing and promoting true religion.

2 Of maintaining peace, and punishing that malefactors may be punished, and well doers be encouraged.

Sinnes of inferiors in gifts or age.

1 Not acknowledging, nor reverencing, nor imitating the graces of their superiors.

2 Despising of the aged.

See the sinnes of superiors in gifts or age, in the very beginning of the fifth Commandement.

Sinnes against the sixth Com- mandement.

1 R 1 Anger, envy, hatred, and malice.

2 Brawling, reviling, threatening, and provoking of others.

3 Fighting.

4 Cruelty in punishing, oppression, &c.

5 Murthuring of our selves or others, or consent thereto.

6 Immoderate worldly sorrow: neglect of physick, or wholesome diet, & exercise in surfeiting & drunkennes; all which are enemies to the health and life of man.

7 Cruelty to our own, or others souls.

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Sinnes against the 7. Commandement.

1 **A**dultery, fornication, incest, rape,
Sodomitie.

2 All wantonnes, secret or open, alone
or with others.

3 nocturnall pollutions, and lustfull
drearines, &c.

4 Wholly marriages in regard of re-
ligion, age, nernesse of blood, want of pa-
rents consent, &c.

5 Abuse of the man. {natural separation
riage bed, not obser- {Leu. 28. 19.
ving the time of solemn humilitatiō.

6 Pursyning of the causes and occa-
sions of wantonnesse, as impure hists, for-
setting, drunkennesse, idlenes, lascivious
apparel, society with lascivious persons,
lewd booke, songs or speeches, wanton
looks, pictures, stage-playes, vanitie,
dalliance, &c.

7 Wearing apparel contrary to our sex.

8 Unlawfull divorce.

Sinnes of the eight Commandement.

Covetousnesse, and all desire of our
neighbours goods, albeit through
fear or shame we cannot get them.

2 Church-

to the Lords Supper.

2 Church-robbing.

3 Robbing of our selves by transgression in diet, apparel, gaming, &c. by idleness, unadvised secret-ship, negligentnesse, &c.

4 Robbing of others, taking away the smallest things: first by fraud: secondly, uncharitable inclosure: thirdly, dealing wrongfully with the goods of the deceased: fourthly, deceit in buying & selling: fifthly, withholding either things committed unto us, or things found, lost, or taken, or other wise due.

5 Not making of restitution.

6 Counselling, or consenting to others in theft.

Sinnes against the ninth Commandement.

1 False witness bearing, in publicke or private, or consent thereto.

2 Tailing, spreading abroad, or listening to false reports of tale-bearers.

3 Mal-suspition, hard indging, interpreting things in the worst sense.

4 Aggravating and discovering others infirmities without care of their credit, others edification, or our owne good.

5 Flattery.

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- 6 Lying, though in feare, unto a god end
- 7 Boasting.
- 8 Injurious charging of our selues to be hypocrites in time of temptation.
- 9 Want of care, of our owne, and others god name, that God might have more glory.

The breach of the tenth Commandement: by

Multitudes of evill thoughts and motions against our neighbours, and scarsity of such as are good.

Q. When we haue attained to a particular sight of our many and grievous iniquities and transgressions, what is further to be done for vs?

A. We must labo^r to bring our hearts to true sorrow & contrition for the same.

Q. What vse is there of that?

A. It is requisite in divers respects: it being a speciall meane to purge our soules from the pollution of sin, to moue the Lord to haue compassion on vs, and plentifullly to poure downe his mercies vpon vs, without which, it is certaine there is no sound repentance in vs, nor mercy to be expected from our God.

Q. Sith

Dan.9.19.
2 Godly
sorrow.
See the
Sermon
on Isa.1.
Do^r.1.
Iam 4.8,9.
Ier.4.14.
Joel2.13.
Zac. 12.20.
Chr.13.8.

to the Lord's Supper.

Q. Sith it is so necessary, shew mee
How it may be gotten.

A. First, we must beseeche the Lord,
(from whom proceedeth every good and
perfect gift) to worke it in our hearts.

Secondly, we must use all god helpe
to stirre up our selues thereto: as,

First, to call to minde the malititude,
and grievousnesse, and offensenesse of
our sinnes, together with our long conti-
nuance therin; aggravating them by eve-
ry circumstance to make them more ob-
ious to our selues.

Secondly, to go to the house of mour-
ning, and to make use of every stroke of
God, as well vpon others, as our selues.

Thirdly, not onely with patient's to en-
dure, but with earnestnes to intreat, and
with gladnes to accept of the help of such
as haue broken hearts themselves, and so
are more able and fayful to pierce and
wound the soules of others.

Fourthly, when by our owne fitting,
and others fayfull dealing, our hearts
are touched with some remorse, let vs se-
riously and throughly ponder vpon the in-
finite mercy of God the Father, begining
his Sonne, and of Chyrch Iesvs in giving

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himselfe for us, who by reason of our sins
were deadly enemies unto him: the considera-
tion whereof cannot but move our
hearts to relent, unlesse they be alto-
gether stony, and hard as Adomant.

Q. When our hearts are touched with
inward griefe for our speciell corrupti-
ons, what is to be done in the next place?

3 Confes-
sion.

See the

Sermon

Pro. 28.

Doct. 1.

2, 14, 19.

2 Sam. 24

12.

Q. What motives are there to induce

vs so to do?

A. Divers: 1. first, without this there
is no yonge wise of pardon of sin, nor indeed
any godly sorrow, or sound repentance
for sinnes.

Secondly, this is a severall pre-
venting against relapses, as may be seen
in David, Peter, and Paul.

Thirdly, This is an effectfull meanes
Dan. 9. 19. to quicken our hearts unto prayer.

Neb. 1. 5, 6. Fourthly, hereby God is much glo-
rified in his Truth, Mercy, and Justice.

Q. Seeing this acknowledgement of
sinne is so needfull, declare how it must
be performed.

A. Three rules must be observed there-
in. First, that it proceed from a god rot.
viz.

I. From

to the Lord's Supper.

- 1 From an bitter hating of sinne: not from wearinelle bader the Crosse, as in Pharaoh, nor from some sudden passion, as in Saul.
- 2 From hope of mercy: for if that be ^{2 Sam. 14.} wanting, we shall never rest on God for ^{18.} pardon.

Secondly, that it may be made in a god manner, viz.

1 Heartily, and sincerely, not coldly and hypocritically.

2 Particularly, and with enumeration of our speciall and most belov'd sins, as ^{1 Cor. 31.19.} in Paul and Ezra.

Q. What will follow upon such a confession?

A. A desire of reformation, and a full purpose to abandon the allowance of ease, ^{4 Reforma-}
^{mation.}
See the
Sermō on
Prov. 28.
Doch. 3.
A. 19. 18
1/2. 1. 18.

try infirmity, and the practice of every grosse sinne.

Q. How may this reformation be attained unto?

A. First, we must constantly and carefully avoide all the occasions of sinne, and be most zealous of our selmes, wheres we are most prone to be overtaken.

Secondly, we must conscientially and continually use all the meanees of goodness.

Thirdly,

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Thirdly, when we are overtakē through infirmitie, we must presently and heartily lament our fall, and seek a reconciliation.

Fourthly, if these meanees preuaile not, we must binde our selues by a solemne vowe to strive against our principall sins, and most dangerous corruptions.

Q. What other notes are there besides these already spoken of, whereby we may be assured that our repentaunce issound, & that our hearts do not deceiuē vs therein?

A. These following: First, if we be universall in our obediencie, desiring to practise or forbeare whatsoeuer God would haue vs: next giving a dispensation to our selues for the committing of any sinne, or for the omitting of any duty, but disliking all manner of euill both in our selues and others.

Secondly, if we increase in goodnesse, neither waxing worse, nor standing at a stay, but daily getting ground of our corruptions.

Thirdly, if in all our intentis and actions we looke unto the Lord, as the iearcher of our hearts, and the tryer & rewarde of our works, not discouraging our selues whatsoeuer men thinks, or speaks of

Notes of
sound re-
pentance.
Psal. 119.6
See the
Sermon
on
that place.
Doct. 2.
Pf. 13.14.

Ioh. 31.1.
1 Cor. 4.3.

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of vs and our doings, so that God do approve of vs and them: not contenting oure selues with mens approbations when the testimony of God is not for vs.

Fourthly, if we like best, and desire most that company in private, and that teaching in publike, where our special corruptions shall be roundly and wisely, and mercifully reproved & inquisighed against, and the daies wherein we come shottest, most earnestly pressed, and stood vpon: neither falling out with those that admonish vs, nor denying, cloaking, excusing or extenuating our faults.

Q. What else is required in a worthy receiuer?

A. A competent measure of knowledge, 2. Know so that he be able to discerne betwixt the elements, and the Lords body and blood: taking every thing in it owne nature and kinde: not confounding the signe with the thing signified, nor putting no difference betwixt the sacramentall and common bread, but vsing each of them in the manner appointed by Christ, & with such reverence as is due unto them, & to that end for which they were ordained: namely, the commemoration of Christ his

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his death, and our nearer and fuller communion with him.

Q. What further examination may we use before our communicating at the Lords Table?

3 Faith.

Heb. 12.6.

Rom. 14.23

A. We must trie whether we have faith or not : without the which it is impossible to please God, and whatsoever we do is sinne.

Q. What then is to bee beleued concerning this particular ordinance?

See the 2.
Serm^b on
Nst. I.4.
Doct. 7.

A. That it is ordained of God not to be a signe to signifie and represent, but also to confirm, and an instrument to exhibit Christ with all his merits unto every belieuer.

4 Loue.

Job. 3.

Q. Why is loue vnto men required in all faichfull receiuers?

A. First, because being destitute of that we cannot be assured of Gods loue vnto vs, nor of our loue vnto him.

Secondly, we cannot with any confidence expect at the sacrament a general acquittance from all our debts vnto God, except we in loue, can passe by small offences in our bretheren.

Mat. 18.35

Thirdly, the Lords Supper is ordained as a seal of a mutuall fellowship, and commu-

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communion of Gods people, as with their
head Christ, so with one another.

Q. What rules are wee to obserue in
at the oure?

A. First, if any indignity or iniurie
hath bane offred vs, we must forgive,
to intend forget the same, and overcomis eny ill
occam with goodnesse: loving them that hate vs,
and prayng for them that speake and pra-
caille eny ill against vs, at least desiring and
striving so to do.

See the
Sermon
on I/2.1.

Doct. 1.

Mat. 18.3

Rom. 12.

Mat. 5.

Secondly, if we have done wrong unto
others, we must vndo it againe: otherwise
our sacrifice and seruice cannot be ac-
cepted.

Q. But what if those that wee haue
wronged bee farre off, that we cannot
seeke vnto them: or will not yeeld to a
reconciliation when it is sought for?

A. God will accept of our true and un-
tained desire in that behalfe, when a re-
conciliation is desired, but occasion denied,
and if others will not be pacified to-
wards vs, it is their fault and not ours,
neither must that keepe vs from the Ma-
crament.

Thus much concerning examination.
What

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Q. What is that Premeditation which must be vsed?

2 Premeditation.

A. It is a serious consideration of the benefits which we are to receive by Christ Jesus.

Q. What are those?

Ecc. 38.21. Jer. 31.31. A. They be set downe in the new testament (whereof the Lords Supper is seale) and they may be reduced to these heads.

1. Freedome from all manner of euill whatesoer, whether of sinne or misery, in this life, or that which is to come:

2 The in joyment of all good things:	1. In this world: and that,	1. For the inward man.	1. Perfect fullfill cation.
	2. In the world: all manner of hap to come.	2. For these outward man. estate, safety, health, &c.	2. True sanctifi cation.

Q. Hauing thus examined our selues concerning our repentance, knowledge, faith, and loue, and vsed premeditation

*

of

to the Lords Supper.

of the benefits that are to be expected of all worthy receiuers, what remaineth further to be done by vs?

A. We must before our approaching to Prayer to the Lords Table, earnestly beseech his gracie to give a blessing to these our endeouours; and where we have come short in fitting our selues, wee are to intreate him to pardon it; to accept of vs in the mediation of his deare Son, and to make a supply of all our wants, of his rich mercy and free grace.

Q. But what if a man find that he cometh very short of that examination, and preparation that is required; were he not better to be absent himselfe from the Sacrament, till he be better fitted.

A. In no wise: for if he be upright hearted, though never so weake, the Lord will accept of him. And if he feele his sicknes to be grievous and dangerous, he hath the more need to hasten to the Physician: neither is the staying from Gods ordinance a means to better his estate, but rather to make him worse, and to pull Gods heavy judgments upon his soul & body. Num. 9.

See the 2
Sermon
on 2. Ch. 3.
Doct 3.

Thus much concerning the duties tending to preparatio before our receiving.

How

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Q. How must wee be disposed in the present act of receiuing?

A. We must present our selues with reverence before the Lord, setting our senses and our faith a work, and heedfully meditating vpon these four things.

How we
are to bee
disposed in
the act of
receiving
Is. 53:

First. When we see the bread broken, and the wine poured out, we must consider the bitter passion of Christ Jesus, who was wounded for our transgressions and broken for our iniquities; who entreated with his Fathers wrath, and with Sathan, death, and hell; and for our sakes in particular sustained such wofull terrors in his soule, and tormentes in his body, that he cried out in the bitterness of his heart, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? and at length shed forth his most precious blood for the pacifying of his Fathers displeasure, and the satisfying of his infinit justice. And withall wee should seriously ponder vpon the inconceivable love of God the Father, in givning his only and well beloved Son, to suffer such unspeakable tortures for us, who were cursed rebels against him: and thence bee drawne to thinke on the habuonnesse and odiousnesse of our sinnes, which

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which so farre incensed the Lords wrath & indignation, that nothing could quench the flame thereof, but onely the precious blood of his deare Sonne.

Secondly, when we see the Minister distributting the bread and wine, we are to consider, that as those outward elements are offered unto vs by man: so Christ Jesus with all his benefits is offered unto vs by the blessed Trinity.

Thirdly, that as we reach forth our naturall hand to receine the bread and wine, we must withdrawe reach forth the hand of faith to apprehend and lay hold on Christ.

Fourthly, in eating the bread and drinking the wine, we must apply Christ with all his merits particularly unto our selves, and be assured, that as that bread and wine are made the nourishment of our bodies: so Christ his body and blood are made the nourishment of our soules: And as certaintly as the bread and wine are made one substance with vs, to strengthen our bodies, and to refresh our hearts, so surely Christ is made one with vs, and we with him, and then our soules shall be strengthened, and our hearts spirit-

A Dialogue of preparation

spirituall received, either presently in the very act of receiving, or afterwards in due time, when we shall stand in most need of comfort. And theresoere in assurance of faith we should stir vp our hearts to expect all the sozenamed benefits of remission of sinnes, and sanctification of our natures, together with the fruitions of all outward blessings, and the remouall of all hurtfull crosses.

Q. Well were it for vs indeed, if wee could look for these things to be bestowed vpon vs: but the greatnesse and multitude of our sinnes is such, that we iustly feare they still keep good things from vs.

A. This doubt should not perplex nor trouble vs, if we be truly penitent for all our transgressions: for Christ hath paid for many and great sinnes, as well as for fewer & lesser: and through him the Lord is ready to pardon all, and all manner of iniquities, as well the greatest of them, as the smallest, and if once our sins be done away, all the sozenamed benefits do of right belong to vs.

Thus much concerning the meditations that are needfull in the very act of receiving.

What

See the
Sermon
on Isa. 1.
Doch. 7.
1. Job. 1. 6.
Eze. 36. 25.

to the Lords Supper.

Q. What is to be done after our receiving?

A. First, we must give hearty thanks unto the Lord for this inestimable benefit, which we have received in being partakers of the Lords Supper.

3 What to
bee done
after our
receiving.

Secondly, wee must carefullly marke how we sped, and what successe we find, and if the Lord afford vs present comfort, we must be much more thankfull, and endeavor by all god meanes to nourish and cherish the same, and if we walke of it so that time, we must notwithstanding give God the glory of his truth, in making god his covenant and every part thereof, and thereforee with confidence and constancy wait and pray for the blessing: resoluteing with our selues (every one in his owne soule) that as sure as God is true, and faithfull in his promises, we shall in the fittest season reape fruit and profit by his ordinance, which in conscience and obedience unto him, we haue beene partakers of. In which regard every particular believer may boldly speake, in this or the like manner vnto his owne soule: I haue walke as great brightnesse as I could, communicated at the Lords table,

C and

A Dialogue of preparation

Psal. 32:

and there receaved the seale of the everlastinge covenant of grace, and therefore it shall assuredly be performed unto me and albeit my faith, and assurance of Gods favour be but weake, it shall be strengthened, and whatsoever Sathan, or mine owne deluded conscience tell me, all mine iniquities are pardoned and covered, and I am at this very instant, as free from sin in Gods account, as Adam was before his fall, and as the Saints and Angels are now in heauen, yea, as Christ Jesus himselfe is, I being a member of his mysticall body.

And soz sanctification, though I be tainted with much ignorance, with many errors, with bad affections and evill actions, yet the Lord according to his covenant, will reforme all, and give me a mind to know him, and his will, and a memory to hold fast what I know: he will give me an heart to loue him, to feare him, and to obey his Commandements. I shall haue Christ his power to strengthen and uphold me, his wisedome to instruct and direct me, and his Spirit to worke all needfull graces in me, so that all the powers of hell shall never be able to prevaile against

to the Lords Supper.

against me, much lese shall the afflictions
of this world be able to separate me from
Christ Jesus. I need not feare any euill:
For all shall worke together for the best
vnto me, neither can I want any thing
that is good, for God having giuen vs his Rom. 8.
Sonnes, how shall hee not with him giue
vs all things?

Thirdly, we must determine and en-
deavour to lead a newe life, bringing forth
the frutes of Repentance, faith, and love,
more abundantly then in former times,
as having renued our covenant with the
Lord for that purpose: and therfore when
we finde any sinful motions stirring with-
in vs, we shoule reason thus: Did I not
at the sacrament vowe and covenant
with God to strue against all manner of
corruptions? and did I not receive the
seale of the covenant in assurance that I
should haue power and strenght against
them? Why then shoule I yeld unto
them? why shoule I be any longer in
bondage vnto them? Nay, I will not serue
sinne in the lusts thereof, but will resist it,
and by the power of Christ I shall get vi-
ctory ouer it: for the Lord hath said that
sinne shall not haue dominion ouer vs. Rom. 6.14

A Dialogue of preparation

So also when we find wants and imperfections in our best services, as coldnesse in praier, distractions in meditating, unfruitlesse in hearing, deadnesse in singing of Psalmes, &c. As also impatency, or saint-heartednesse vnder crosses, disgraces, persecutions, &c. Let vs then rellene our selues with these, or the like meditations: Was I not lately at the Lords table, where I received a pledge of my ingrafting into Christ, who is the true Wine: and is there not in him sufficiente iuice of all god graces to be derived to every branch that is in him: and is not the second Adam as able to convey his vertues into me, as the first Adam was to convey his corruptions: why then should I not leake to him, in assurance of obtaining strength to do and suffer what soever he will have me: yea, I will run unto him, and crave power and ability from him, and asking, I shall obtaine: for he hath said it, that will never falsifie the least part of his truth.

Ioh. 15.

Q. May it not then be concluded, if immediatly vpon the receiuing of this Sacrament, we grow worse then we were before, that we came vnworthily thereunto?

A. Yes

to the Lords Supper.

A. Yes verily, if we be indeed worse, and not in our owne conceit onely, it is sure that there was some sinne or other unrepented of lying vpon our consciences which caused Gods ordinance to be ineffectuall. Indeed the wrostiest receivers, in their owne imaginations, and through Satans false suggestions, come unto themselves to be worse (when in truth they are not so) because they feare their corruptions stirring more violently, and temptations rushing vpon them more fiercely then ever before: but this is so farre from being an argument of unlawfull receiving, that if they let themselves to resist this combat, there can be no more evident testimony of their lawfully receyving: soz nowe that their sinne hath had a deadly blow, it beginneth (like a mad bull in the same case) to rage more furiously; and Satan being dispossessed of his holds, plyeth his busynesse with new and fearfull assaults; and therefore such haue no cause at all to be dismayed, but rather very great cause to be comforted.

Q. But (will some say) what shall I thinke of my selfe in this matter, when I finde, that whereas I resolued vpon new

C 3 obe-

A Dialogic of preparation

obedience, I come still farre short of that
which I am desirous to performe.

A. You need not discourage your heart
for al this: the sight of your impetuosity
arguably that your eyes are more enspite-
famed then in former times, and that you
have gotten an humble and lowly conceit
of your selfe, and your good deeds, which
are things very pleasing unto God: ne-
ther doth he require such strict observan-
ce of the Commandments, as that we
should obey them in perfection, but only
that we should consent in our hearts, and
labour in our power to yeeld obedient
thereunto: which if we can do, the Lord
will graciously accept of us, and of those
deeds whiche we performe, seeing that we
fail not in the substance of his service, but
only in some circumstancies, and that full
soe against our will.

See the
Sermon on
Isa. 1.
Doct. 1.

See the
Sermo on
2 Chr. 30.
Doct. 3.

FINIS.

1